



Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence

The *Guidelines for Excellence* developed by the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) point out six key characteristics of high quality education materials. The *Guidelines* were designed to help educators, administrators, curriculum designers, and materials developers evaluate the quality of materials.

Key Characteristic #1: Fairness and Accuracy

- 1.1 Factual accuracy
- 1.2 Balanced presentation of differing viewpoints and theories
- 1.3 Openness to inquiry
- 1.4 Reflection of diversity

Key Characteristic #2: Depth

- 2.1 Awareness
- 2.2 Focus on concepts
- 2.3 Concepts in context
- 2.4 Attention to different scales

Key Characteristic #3: Emphasis on Skills Building

- 3.2 Critical and creative thinking
- 3.3 Applying skills to issues
- 3.4 Action skills

Key Characteristic #4: Action Orientation

- 4.1 Sense of personal stake and responsibility
- 4.2 Self-efficacy

Key Characteristic #5: Instructional Soundness

- 5.2 Learner-centered instruction
- 5.3 Different ways of learning
- 5.4 Connection to learners' everyday lives
- 5.5 Expanded learning environment
- 5.6 Interdisciplinary
- 5.7 Goals and objectives
- 5.8 Appropriateness for specific learning settings
- 5.9 Assessment

Key Characteristic #6: Usability

- 6.1 Clarity and logic
- 6.2 Easy to use
- 6.3 Long-lived
- 6.4 Adaptable
- 6.5 Accompanied by instruction and support
- 6.6 Make substantiated claims
- 6.7 Fit with national, state, or local requirements

From: North American Association for Environmental Education. (2004). *Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence*. Washington, DC: www.naaee.org/npeee.